

2300
A
S E R M O N

Preached at the

Cathedral Church of *Worcester*,

O N

The 30th of *January*, 1744-5.

By D. BROOKER, Vicar of St. Peter's.¹

Publish'd at the Request of the MAYOR and ALDERMEN.

Legum Ministri, Magistratus:

Legum Interpretes, Judices:

*Legum denique idcirco Omnes servi sumus, ut Liberi
esse possimus.*

Cic. Orat. pro Cluent.

*Mihi esse Judicabo Romam, Ubicunq; Liberum esse
licebit.*

Bruti. Epist. ad Cicer.

W O R C E S T E R :

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THE P R E F A C E.

IT is impossible for an ingenious Mind to read the History of those Times, which are the Subject of the following Pages, without feeling the same tender Emotions, which naturally arise, when We behold the Ravages of a Shipwreck; pitying indeed the Miseries of Those who have undergone the Horrors of the Storm, yet internally pleas'd We were not engaged in it Ourselves.

THE Design of the following Discourse was not to repeat those Grievances which every serious Mind must wish were buried in Oblivion, but (since Men will perversely quarrel with one another, now, for Things done an hundred Years ago) to shew the Unreasonableness of inflaming the Passions on any Side, before they have carefully perus'd the History:—The Desolations of Publick Commotions;—the Dread we should be perpetually under of lending the best helping Hand to awaken those Miseries again; and the Duty of lifting up the solemn Eye to Heaven, for the Blessings of those Civil and Religious Liberties We now enjoy. And as I had the Happiness of finding that I had the Approbation of this CORPORATION, so I could not help complying with their Request for its Publication: And, indeed, I comply'd

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ply'd the more readily, not only as it was a virtual Indication, that I spoke their Sentiments; but that it was their Determination to discourage by their Example, and resent by their Authority, any mean and wicked Attempts, which (through a false Notion of Patriotism) shall be made; to disconcert the wholesome Measures of Government;—to give Uneasiness to the Powers who watch painfully for our Protection, or to involve us in the same Anarchy and Confusion again.

THAT the Blessings of Peace, in its utmost Latitude of Mind, Body, and Estate, may alight upon the Head of every Subject of Great Britain, who shall seriously promote the Peace of OUR ISRAEL, is the earnest Prayer of

D. Brooker.

JOHN, Chap. xviii, Part of the 38th Verse.

— And Pilate said unto him, *What is Truth?* And when he had said this he went out.



HEN the *Jews* had brought *JESUS* before the Tribunal of *Pilate*, as he found their first Accusation turn'd chiefly on Matters relating to their Religion, as he *car'd* for none of those Things, he was entering into Measures to release him. The *Jews* apprehensive of this, directly threw into the Charge the Crime of Rebellion against *Cæsar*; that he called and set himself up for a King, and that in Opposition to the *Roman Government*:— Not that they esteem'd this any Crime in their own Breasts, for they look'd upon all *Roman* Governors but as so many Tyrants; for while they read those Words in the Law of *Moses*, * *One of thy Brethren shalt thou set over thee*, so long they look'd upon themselves in a State of Slavery for being under the *Roman Jurisdiction*.—But any thing to destroy *JESUS*: They, who but sometime before were ready to † stone him for dropping the least Expression that Way, which, to their Imagination, even hinted towards their Subjection, produce it now as a Thing worthy of Death; that he was erecting a new Kingdom in Opposition to that of *Cæsar*.

Pilate, who knew well the Brutality of his Master's Temper, was startled at this last Charge; and therefore, though but a Minute before he had been meditating his Release, now enters into a stricter Examination of him again. *Art thou the*

* Deut. xvii. and xv. † John viii. 33, and 37.

King of the Jews? Jesus answer'd, v. 36. *My Kingdom is not of this World: if my Kingdom were of this World, then would my Servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my Kingdom not from hence.* (i. e.) I am indeed setting up a Kingdom, but then it is not such a Kingdom as need give any Disturbance or Uneasiness to the Roman Powers. I have no temporal Designs in Hand or Prospect: They use no worldly, nor I any supernatural Means (though I have them in my Power) for my Release: It is plain, therefore, that *my Kingdom* is not of *this World*, that its Nature consists not in earthly and ambitious Views, but in reigning in, and over, the Hearts and Wills of Men, and in bringing *them* in Subjection to the Holy Will and Laws of GOD.—*Pilate* answers, *Art thou a King then!* (q. d.) However, you do acknowledge yourself a King: *Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a King; to this End was I born, and for this Cause came I into the World, that I should bear Witness to the Truth.*

As this was the peculiar Time for our Lord's *witnessing a good Confession*, and explicitly declaring the true Nature and Meaning of his Kingdom, if *Pilate* had pursu'd the Inquiry farther, he had then a glorious Opportunity of hearing the whole Nature of that Kingdom fully open'd; but to hear a Man (as he thought him) professing himself a KING, and of those very *Jews* too, who were at this Time thirsting, right or wrong, to destroy him; to hear a Prisoner bound in Chains before him, entertain Notions of a Kingdom;—this was so absurd to his prejudiced and uninquisitive Temper, that, instead of examining farther into the Nature of that Truth which Jesus said he came to bear Witness to, with a Mark of extreme Contempt, he only scornfully ask'd him, *What is Truth!* and then went out: (i. e.) He ask'd, what Truth was, and then refus'd to hear *what* it was.

The Sense and Connection of the Words being shown, I shall not pursue the History any further, but only observe,
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how frequently this perverse Conduct of *Pilate* is copied in the World by warm Men of all Parties, in Matters wherein they differ in Sentiments one from another; inquiring (when press'd close with ungrateful Truths) with Passion or Contempt, what is Truth, and yet never intend to hear it prov'd, or examine with Patience and Fidelity, whether the Objections offer'd are founded upon Truth or not, because they may happen to contradict some Principles which *Custom, Party, Prejudice, Education, or Pilate's Motive (Interest)* have casually attach'd them to.

Custom, I say, Party, Prejudice, Education, or *Pilate's Motive (Interest,)* rather than Truth, or the Nature and Reason of Things, have too great a Share, 'tis to be fear'd, in fixing the Principles of many; and the best Reason which Numbers can give, why they are of such a Party, or even of such a Church, is, because *such* were the Principles of their *Fore-fathers*; but, if that is all the Reason which either you, or I, can give for our Principles, either religious or political, it is an exceeding poor one, since, if Things stand thus, it is owing only to the Providence of a casual Birth, that a *strict Protestant* is not a *rank Papist*, or a *zealous Royalist* a *furious Oliverian*.

While Men, therefore, will not trouble themselves with Reading and Examination, but will obstinately take up a Set of Principles upon *Credit*, and fire themselves with *Hear-says* of *any one Side only*, I cannot help thinking it a Sort of Infelicity ~~for~~ ^{for} a Preacher to appear upon such Occasions as these; where the Generality of Congregations are so much divided, where few of them have calmly consider'd the History, and taken Notice of the many bitter Severities and Hardships which all the contending Parties reciprocally gave to, and received each from the other; and where too many, I fear, come together, not for the Sake of impressing upon their Minds the Miseries of those Times, or to behold, in the *Mirror of Reflection*, those *past* Tragedies, and from thence to guard against the like Calamities for the future;—not for the Sake of re-
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turning Thanks to the good Providence of God, that he has not cast our Lot in those Days, when Men were too often esteem'd by the Party they enlisted in, and, tho' cloath'd with all the social Vertues, were treated with the Injury or Contempt of casually victorious Sides; — not for the Sake of carrying home such Reflections as might render them better Subjects, greater Promoters of Brotherly Love and Charity; but either to hear the Sentiments of the Preacher, whether his Principles are the same with theirs, or to lay in a Stock of Calumny and Reproach to keep the Fire of Uncharitableness alive, till the next Anniversary comes round again for a fresh Recruit.

Where this is the Case, then every Thing shall be admitted for Truth on *one* Side, because it makes for them; and every Thing false on the *other*, because it makes against them. *But, Beloved, we are persuaded better Things of you, tho' we thus speak.*

I persuade myself that I appear before an Assembly of *Englishmen*, jealous of their Liberties, civil and religious, of that Liberty which we (blessed be GOD) enjoy the Substance of, and which in many other Countries is known only but by the *Name*; and tho' there *have been Times* in which a Set of mercenary Preachers have been carress'd, applauded, and preferr'd for attempting, all that was in their Power, to compliment the Monarch with all the Liberties of a Free People, and have had the Fortune to have all their Speeches swallow'd down without Examination; yet I dare not suspect this of *You*: Nor can I imagine, but that, if any such contemptible Scheme should be attempted to be recommended to *You*, but you would receive such Discourses with that Coldness and Neglect which they deserve from every *Englishman*, who has read what noble Struggles our Ancestors have *often* made for that invaluable Blessing, *Reasonable Liberty*.

Nor am I less persuaded, that you are as jealous of *Truth* as you are of your Liberties; that *Truth* is your great Inquiry;

quiry; that your Inquiry after it is not *Pilate's Question* of *Scorn*, but for Satisfaction; that *You* would purchase it at any Expence; in a Word, that *You* wou'd discard the most favourite Opinions, should they once appear not to be founded on *this Basis*.

Would to GOD this was the Temper of *all Men*, and that *nothing* was to be regarded, but only as it will bear *this Test*; for as the Sentiments of a Preacher are *nothing* to an Audience, so all that He says is only to be regarded but as it shall appear to be *Matter of Fact*, and supported by *Testimonies* of proper and credible *Authority*: And verily am I persuaded, that if Truth was the *only Subject* of Inquiry, on these Occasions, it would considerably tend to mitigate that bitter Rancour of Party Rage, which ever since has been walking up and down, like a *Minister of Darkness*, in the Land; because then it would put them upon reading the History, and judging for themselves, and thereby prevent them from venting their Passions on *either Side*, 'till, by a proper Search into the Records of those Times, they had acquainted themselves *with the original Causes*, which occasioned those unhappy Contentions between *both*.

The Historical Records of those Times are the *only Method* *We* have, to come at the Knowledge of those Transactions, and of the Steps that were taken which gave the *first Rise* to those fatal Disputes between the King and People; and as there are but few Writers whom we can imagine to be entirely free from *all Bias*; so the best Way of arriving at any Certainty to fix the Judgment, is to lay *all* their Testimonies together, and from them *conjunctly* to inquire,

“ Whether the original Causes of those Disputes sprung from
 “ an *actually rebellious Principle*, and an *evil Disposition* in the
 “ Parliament and Nation to destroy the Monarchy, and overthrow the legal Establishment of the Church; or *only* from a
 “ Desire to prevent the Prerogative of the Crown from swallowing up the Rights and Liberties of the Subject? —

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“ Whether

“ Whether the Subject *rebelliously* refus’d to pay Taxes *legally*
 “ *imposed* by the Authority of their *Representatives*; or whe-
 “ ther, as the Parliament was not willing to supply Money for
 “ the Recovery of the *Palatinate*, which had been ingloriously
 “ lost, there were not many *unhappy, imprudent and arbitrary*
 “ Measures taken to raise it *without* them?—Whether the
 “ Duties, order’d to be collected on Merchandize, were re-
 “ fus’d from a *wicked Spirit* of resisting *legal Authority*; or
 “ whether many Duties were not rigorously collected on
 “ Trade, which had been positively refused to be settled by
 “ Parliament?—Whether the Council-Table acted in *Con-*
 “ *cert with* the *Laws*, which are the Subjects *Security*; or
 “ whether enjoying by *Proclamation* what was not enjoyn’d
 “ by *Law*, and prohibiting what was not prohibited, they did
 “ not find themselves easy in such Proceedings from the Sup-
 “ port they receiv’d from the Star-Chamber, which censur’d
 “ the Breach of those Proclamations, by large and severe Fines?
 “ —Whether the Compliance with Loans was left (as with-
 “ out Dispute they ought to have been, and as the natural
 “ *Meaning* of the Word imports) to the Subjects *free Choice*;
 “ or whether upon a Refusal, the *lower* Sort of People were
 “ not inlisted for Soldiers. and those of *higher* Station com-
 “ mitted to Prison?—Whether any Subject, tho’ of *high*
 “ *Rank* and Condition, could, in those unhappy Times, ex-
 “ pect to be any longer free, than while he resolved to com-
 “ ply with those extraordinary Measures? —~~In a Word,~~
 “ Whether, as these Courses were not likely to continue long,
 “ Persuasions were not often heard from the very Pulpits, in
 “ order to bind that as a *Matter of Conscience*, under Pain of
 “ Eternal Damnation, which was not bound upon the Con-
 “ science by *Law*?—Whether *Archbishop ABBOT* himself
 “ was not suspended from his Function, and confin’d to his
 “ Country Seat, for not licencing one of these servile Sermons?
 “ In a Word, Whether they were the *rash and giddy* Part
 “ of the Nation, or whether they were not the *Wise and Un-*
 “ *derstanding,*

“ *derstanding*, to whose Apprehensions the Foundations, by
 “ which Men valued their Security, seem’d *never more* in
 “ Danger of Destruction?”—These are *turning Points* concerning these unhappy Disputes, and no Man ought to work himself up to Flights of Passion, before he has satisfied himself whether these Proceedings are *true*; and, if true, whether they can *seriously be defended*.

From *Civil*, we should next inquire, whether there is any Truth in those *Ecclesiastical Grievances*, which are said to make up Part of the Complaints of those Days:—Whether there was an *originally wicked Intention*, in those who engag’d in the first Opposition, to overthrow the legal Establishment of the Church; or, whether there were not several *unadvised* and *ridiculous Ceremonies* attempted to be practis’d in the Church, which they had no Authority from his Majesty for, and which *she* was entirely a Stranger to?—Whether it was not dangerous even for the Clergy of the Establish’d Church, unless they intended to be fin’d and imprison’d, to preach against such Innovations?—Whether People were not fined for taking offensive and idolatrous Images out of Church-Windows?—Whether Papists, depending on the Shelter of the Queen, were not become exceeding insolent, disturbing, sometimes, the *Service* in the Church, and behaving with that *public Boldness*, as if they affected to be thought *dangerous* to the State?—These Things, I say, are said to give Rise to the Jealousies and Suspicions, which, for want of *Cooling-Tempers* on both Sides to pour Oil into the Wounds of the Body Politic, terminated, at last, in that *unnatural Civil-War*; and which, when once begun, will *naturally* branch out into numberless Severities, which neither Side *thought of before*. Our great Business, therefore, is impartially to inquire, which of these *two* Representations is the *Truth*; and, as we shall find Matters upon that Inquiry to turn out, to draw from thence such Inferences as may fix our Judgment, or influence our Conduct, in such a Manner as is suitable to the *intended Design* of this Solemnity.

As, *First*, With Respect to our Judgment.—If the first Representation is Truth;—if the Life of the Monarch, and the Overthrow of the Government of the Church were *originally intended* by those who appear'd in the *first* Opposition: Why then, no Dispute to be made, but that Opposition was *rank Rebellion*, and highly worthy of *St. Paul's eternal Condemnation*. But it, upon Examination and Inquiry, there was no such Thing *intended by them*, and the latter shall be found to be the State of the Case; why then to remember, that as *Facts* are *stubborn* Things, and will not *bend to our Passions*, so they will not be answer'd in *Pilate's Manner*, by a contemptuous *Turn upon the Heel*, and only crying, *What is Truth?* But Things will still continue in themselves to be what they are, and *Facts* will still remain *Facts*, however they may clash with *some* Principles or Inclinations, which Men have form'd to themselves, and *determine* not to part with.

Again;—Such an Inquiry, if made with Care and Fidelity, will teach us to distinguish between the concealed *impious* Designs of a *few*, and the Stand that was made by *others*, who had *no such* Designs in View,—betwixt the Murder of the King, and the first Opposition made to the Measures suggested by evil Counsellors. No Man, I think, who is not of *directly Republic Principles*, ever *pretends* to justify the *Death* of the King: No; (without Dispute,) it was an *illegal Murder*, and that contrary to the Sentiments of the *Majority* of the Nation; as a noble * Lady had the Courage to cry out upon the very Trial, and particularly, as it was at a Time when the Parliament had voted his Concessions a *reasonable Ground* for Peace: However, tho' all these Circumstances constitute it a *Black Murder*, yet This is *no* Condemnation of Those whose Views were *only* to stop the Growth of Prerogative, and prevent it from swallowing up the Rights and Liberties of the Subject.

If we design to judge impartially of these Transactions, we should imagine *ourselves to have liv'd in those very Ages*. I

* The Lady FAIRFAX.

only put the Question to this Assembly present, and demand a serious Answer at every Man's private Breast: Suppose the Royal Mandate was to come down to *Worcester, now*, and demand of this *Honourable Corporation* only the same Sums which were demanded of others; confine some of your Members, upon Refusal, and this *without*, (nay, *against*) the Consent of your Representatives?—Suppose you shou'd hear a Compliance with those Demands, *inforced to you from the Pulpit, under the Penalty of eternal Condemnation*?—Suppose you shou'd see some of the present Bishops introducing new and unheard-of Ceremonies into the Church of *England*, which shines bright enough in her native Simplicity?—As Men, I say, are *not omniscient*, and cannot see into Men's Hearts, but can only judge of their *Sentiments* by their *Actions*, shou'd you see *such* Proceedings carry'd on now, wou'd you not be strongly inclined to think, that your Liberties, religious as well as civil, were struck at? For if the Thing was *really intended*, what *other* Steps, than *these* cou'd be taken to bring about such an Event?

Liberty, civil and religious, is, by the Providence of Heaven, the happy *Birthing* of an *Englishman*: By *Liberty*, I don't mean the Liberty, or rather *modern* Licentiousness of an unbridled Insolence, of *personal Reflections* upon *Majesty*, and reviling those who are in Authority under him, even at the Time when we are under a *just* and *mild* Government; but, which is quite as delightful, and much more *desirable*, as well as *beneficial* to Society, a Liberty and Security from feeling the Resentments of *any Man's* mere Will and Fancy; and an Exemption from *all Pains and Penalties*, 'till the *Laws* pronounce us guilty: And, if this is not the Case, the Coronation-Oath is but an *unmeaning Sound*, and *Magna Charta* but a *dead Letter*.—If the Crown has *its Prerogatives*, the People (blessed be GOD) have *their Rights and Liberties*; and if, contrary to all Equity, Laws, or Reason, these are arbitrarily broke in upon and invaded, and their Persons and Properties become subject to the *absolute Demands*
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of a mere *Hoc volo sic jubeo*, it's absolutely necessary to put a Stop to such Proceedings. I don't say by the Murder of a PRINCE, but by all the *reasonable Ways* that *Prudence* can suggest to preserve a SOCIETY from Ruin and abject Servitude. And let me add, *This was the Opinion of the Royal Martyr* himself; witness, that Assistance he sent to the *Rochellers*, who, for the Oppressions they suffer'd, were up in Arms against their *lawful Sovereign, the King of France*: No one can doubt of his Majesty's *Sincerity* in assisting them; but that he *seriously* thought it no Crime in a *People* to preserve themselves from Ruin, even tho' it was by *Force of Arms*. We are justified, therefore, by the *King's own Example*, to distinguish between the Murder of a Prince, and opposing civil Oppressions when once they are become *national*. His Murder, indeed, was the *unhappy Consequence* of *this Opposition*; but in this, as in all other remarkable Transactions, considerate Men will always separate the *Consequences* of Actions from their *original Intention*. It is an *Apostolic Rule*, indeed, that we should not, and he pronounces Condemnation upon those who do *Evil* that *Good* may come of it; but *unhappy Consequences* will not stamp every human Action with Guilt and Condemnation, unless that Action was in itself *originally evil in the Intention*. And this was the very Case before us; for however reasonable the first Opposition might appear to the Parliament, yet, neither the *Life* of the Monarch, nor the *Subversion* of the Constitution, were then *aim'd at*: This was owing only to an unforeseen Train of Events, and to the *private*, wicked, and ambitious Views of a *VERY few*, who kept their Designs secret, 'till, by working them artfully into the Public Disorder, they became, at last, capable of completing those *villanous Schemes*, which, had they discovered sooner, the Parliament itself would have prevented, for they remonstrated against it; nor could the Fact at last be perpetrated, 'till that Parliament was destroy'd: And this the Son of the Royal Martyr himself acknowledges, in a Proclamation at his Restoration,

storation, where he stiles it the Work only of a FEW Miscreants, and imputes it neither to the Parliament or Nation.—No; it was the Act only of a few, neither the Destruction of the Monarch, nor the Overthrow of the Church were intended in the original Opposition. My Lord CLARENDON owns, (*Vol. 1. Pag. 717.*) That “*the Kingdom was little inclined to Popery, less to Puritanism: The Church was not repin’d at, nor the least Inclination shewn to alter her Discipline, or change her Doctrines; nor were there at that Time any considerable Number of Persons, of any valuable Consideration, who wish’d either.*” That even the fourth Parliament, (*tho’ after a Dissolution of near twelve Years, and a Proclamation declaring it *Presumption* for any to prescribe to his Majesty any Time for Parliaments,) met again with wonderful Order and Sobriety, and were Men of such Dispositions, that † it could never be hoped that more sober and more dispassionate Men wou’d ever meet together again in that Place; or fewer, who brought ill Purposes with them; § that they were exceedingly disposed to serve him; †† nor could any imagine what Offence they had given, which could put the King upon so hasty a Resolution: i. e. of dissolving them. Nay, that even the last Parliament itself, Nov. 1640, §§ consisted of Men (many of whom were wise and grave) of all imaginable Duty for the King, and Affection to the Government established by Law or antient Custom; and the MAJOR Part of whom had no Mind to break the Peace of the Kingdom, or make any Alteration in the Government of Church or State.

The first Opposition, therefore, arose not from ONE QUARTER only, nor was the Overthrow of Church or State its original Design; but the Miseries that followed were an unhappy and unforeseen Train of Events, brought about by some wicked and designing Men, whose Stratagems were not discover’d till too late to be prevented. The original Design was only to put a Stop to the exorbitant Growth of Prerogative, and of

* Vol. I. Pag. 5. † Pag. 110. § Pag. 107. †† 110. §§ 147.

the *Star-Chamber*, &c. which had much overflow'd its Banks ; and which, had they gone on *without Interruption*, would, perhaps, by this Time, have left us no more Liberty to have boasted of, than our Neighbours, who were once as free a People as *ourselves*.

Another Inference, which may be drawn from this Solemnity, is, to take Care that the Observation of this Time has its *proper intended* Effect upon our present Conduct.

The Design of committing the Histories of *preceding* Ages to *Writing*, was to point out the Methods by which Kingdoms have been rais'd to Glory, and the Rocks and Shelves on which their Happiness and Prosperity have bulg'd: And as this Day was appointed, by *Authority*, to keep in Memory the dreadful Miseries which *Civil Contentions* eternally bring along with them, let it produce the intended Effects. Shall we, then, commemorate these Occasions in such a Manner as to pervert the *original Intention* of their Institution? If the Day is to be *observed*, cannot we observe it *without Spleen and Rancour*? Shall the Observance of this Time (designed to shew the extreme *Mischief* of Popular Animosities) be *unnaturally* the Occasion of *continuing* them? Cannot we shew our Detestation of the *unjust Murder* of a Prince, without branding those Patriots, who appear'd in Defence *only* of their National Liberties, with the *hard Names* of *Rebels* and *Regicides*? If it must be observed, let it be us'd as a Means and Motive to unite us more and more in *brotherly Love*, *mutual Forbearance*, and the *Bond of Peace*: Let it not be a Fast of *Envyings* and *Swellings*, *Strifes* and *Contentions*; for if the *perpetual, necessary* and *unavoidable* Effect, which its Observation *must* produce, is only to make Men *HATE* *one another*, I do not see what great Inconveniencies would follow, if the *Legislature* was to lay it aside, since *these are Times* when *now* there is the most *absolute Necessity* for our being no more a *divided* People amongst ourselves, as we are in Arms against those *implacable* Enemies, whom nothing can satisfy but our *total*
Ruin;

Ruin; whose Language has often been, *Come, let us destroy them from being a People; their Names shall be had no more in Remembrance;* and who, by their late attempted Invasion, shew'd, to demonstration, that their chief Dependance is upon our own *internal Divisions*, knowing that if (GOD forbid) they could glut their Eyes with *this Sight*, there would be no Necessity for bringing the Instruments of War to make Breaches in our Walls; that *we ourselves* should do their Business for them; anticipate their Victories upon, and prepare *ourselves* for their easy Conquest.

Another Duty which this Solemnity should naturally suggest, is, *Fourthly*, The warm Returns of a grateful Heart to the Providence of GOD, that He hath not cast our Lot in *those Days of Trouble and Division*. With Regard to the Modes and Discipline of the Church, we have no Ceremonies but what are grave and decent, and accommodated to *worship the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness*: With Regard to our Ecclesiastical Governors, we have no *Fines*, no *Confiscations*, no *Imprisonments* for Conscience Sake; we are contented to let *every Man stand or fall to his own Master*; not knowing, however we may differ from him in *some Points*, but that GOD may have *receiv'd him*: The very Rulers and Spiritual Fathers of our Church own they have *no Power over Men's PRIVATE CONSCIENCE*. They appear generously *themselves*, as Patrons of Religious as well as Civil Liberty, plead and write for the Necessity of CHRIST's being the *only King and Head*, and *Law-giver in his own Church*; and, with the *same Christian Spirit and Humility* of the Apostle, profess themselves *Helpers only of our Joy, not having Dominion over our Faith*.

Nor are we less obligated to the same *distinguishing* Providence of GOD, for that, after these Storms and Tempests have subsided, he has mercifully conducted to the Throne His present Majesty King GEORGE, who governs Us *only* by the Laws He found among us, and those which our Representatives think *necessary* to be made for our Welfare and
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Preservation; and who never has *stretch'd even those Laws* to the Detriment of the *meanest Subject*; but constantly administers them in *such a Manner*, that *All*, but those *servile Spirits* who are for returning back into *Egyptian Slavery* again, find themselves blessed with as much *Satisfaction* as *Security*. A *Prince* who, as he stands in no *Need* of having *unlimited Passive-Obedience*, and *Non-Resistance* preached up to the People as *Matters of Conscience*, so he gives no Encouragement to such mean Designs; who is so far from invading, *arbitrarily*, the Subjects Rights, Religion, or Laws, that He is, with great Reluctance, by all Accounts, dissuaded from venturing his Sacred Life, a *second Time*, for the Preservation of them all.

If we are, therefore, *sincere* in our *present Humiliation*; let us express our Sincerity and Sorrow for the *Injuries* offer'd to the late unhappy Monarch, by a dutiful and *reasonable Obedience* to his *present Majesty*: Let us not be so *inconsistent* with ourselves, as *one Day in the Year* to give out, that *no Obedience* can be *too much*; and then behave all the Year after in so indifferent a Manner, as if we thought *any* was *enough*; but let us, in these Times *particularly* of Trouble and Distress, *act consistently* with ourselves, by a *mutual Oblivion of past Injuries*; by reciprocal Returns of Christian Charity among ourselves, and by turning our Resentments, not *against one another*, but the *Common Enemy*: Let us give His Majesty, by these Proofs, the Satisfaction to see, that we are as truly *grateful*, as sensible, for the domestic Peace and Quiet we enjoy under the Mildness of his Administration; and that, in Return for these Blessings, we make it our *Daily Prayers* to the KING OF KINGS, that he would be graciously pleased, in this critical Conjunction of Affairs, to direct his Counsels, protect his Person wherever he goes, render him victorious over *all* the Disturbers of our Peace and Quiet, and finally crown him with everlasting Glory in the World to come.

Which God grant, for, &c. 10 FEB 58

F I N I S.

